342 The external layers cover the whole building, like very precise and well clipped sheets of straw. The side walls are not distinct from the roof, but mere extensions of it.

Of the two houses we have described, in the village close to the Carumi (or Festa da Bandeira) River, the larger covers 30 meters in circumference, the other 28. Their doorways measure 0.37 meters in width by 0.52 meters in height. These two houses stand on a plaza some twenty meters in diameter.

352 Inside the huts stand three bamboo grids [giraus] to dry manioc
354 scrapings, and two enormous black pots which could not have come
[352] through the doors; lighter utensils and various other implements, as well as ornaments, are kept in the ceiling thatch. This serves as the Indians' closet, where they hide their smaller belongings. [Fig. 24]

354 A small fire burns underneath each grid.

These grids were made up of four bamboo stalks sunk into the ground and supporting a horizontal grate of small bamboo reeds. They measured about two meters in length by one and a half in width.

The huts are not equipped with any smoke holes, and none are needed. The smoke of inside fires filters easily through the interstices of the thatch.

356 Around the dwelling, scattered or in heaps, lie disjointed bones, fragmented coconuts, pods of the jatobá bean, corn cobs, charcoal, and food refuse, mixed with worn-out tools and utensils.

412 In the village on the Festa da Bandeira River, I found beside a house a large object which I only failed to bring back because it would have been absolutely impossible to transport it. It was of a kind commonly found in the sambaquis [224] of the Atlantic coast: a rock pitted with several depressions large enough to hold a fingertip. To
[222 one side lay a prodigious quantity of small bacaba nuts, both shelled
262] and unshelled. It has often been inferred that this implement was used to produce fires, but in the Serra do Norte it merely serves to shell palm nuts. This stone, however, was much larger than those generally encountered in the sambaquis.

342 The temporary shelter consists of a screen of leaves and branches. The Indians may use it for a few days if hunting in the area is good; then they abandon it.

361 [226] We do not know yet what determines these shifts to nearby locations; they may perhaps be caused by the death of an [768] Indian or by some communal misfortune. The distances involved are so small that the moves could not possibly derive from any significant ecological changes.

342 In order to keep rain water from seeping underneath the thatch, the Tagnani and Tawite Indians cover the inner ground perimeter of their conical huts with a series of overlapping plates made of jatobá shells.

The rain does not leak in.

354 It would not be fair to imagine the interior of the huts as hot and stuffy; air penetrates freely in between the leaves.

Nevertheless, the situation changes when the Indians light their small fires. Happily for them, the thatch is sufficiently permeable to keep their eyes free from the grave diseases often encountered among primitive peoples whose dwellings are smoky.

362 Household furnishings are rudimentary; except for the grids mentioned above and a few large pots, nothing else might properly be termed a piece of furniture. All other objects are tools, artifacts, [784] weapons and ornaments [227] [plates p. 222] which they carry with them on every journey, no matter how brief. Only the heavier mortars and graters, which cannot be carried easily, are left in the hut. These barbarians in turn could say: "Omnia mea mecum porto" [everything that is mine I carry with me].

Straw pallets, cured hides, hammocks, sleeping platforms, cots and true beds represent types of bedding characteristic of different stages of civilization.

513 The use of pallets already indicates a certain degree of advancement; but the Nambicuara have no bed other than the earth. They sleep on the bare ground.

They did not possess the hammock, that inseparable companion of their neighbors the Paresi; now that they are acquainted with it, they hold it in high regard. It was difficult to obtain any rest among them during the night; no sooner had we set up our hammock than three or four candidates would appear... And once they had taken over, it was hard to get it back. We were frequently awakened by Indians who forcibly asserted their desire to sleep in the hammocks we occupied.

7:Roquette-Pinto--288 E-4, 5 (no date)1938 SP17 Nambicuara SP17
(ca. 1912)

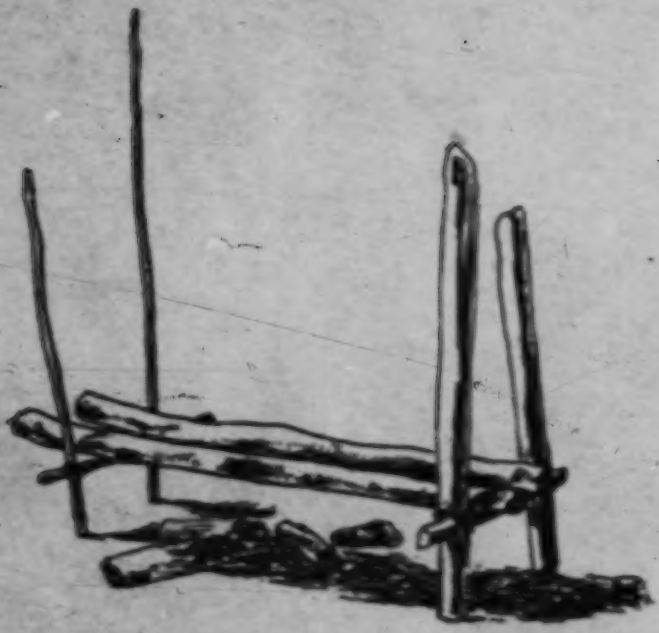

Fig. 28. Barbecue of the Tagnani and Tawite.